Solicitation Information

RFP# 7460221

TITLE: Institutional Review Board Hosted Software Services - RIC
          (3/1/13 – 2/28/16 with a 1 year option to renew)

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: Tuesday February 26, 2013 at 10:30 AM (EST)

- **PRE-BID/ PROPOSAL CONFERENCE:**   **No**

Questions concerning this solicitation may be e-mailed to the Division of Purchases at questions@purchasing.ri.gov no later than **2/14/2103 AT NOON (EST).** Please submit questions in a Microsoft Word format and reference the RFP # on all correspondence. Answers to questions received, if any, will be posted on the Internet as an addendum to this solicitation. It is the responsibility of all interested parties to download this information.

- **SURETY REQUIRED: No**

- **BOND REQUIRED:**   **No**

Thomas Bovis
Interdepartmental Project Manager

Vendors must register on-line at the State Purchasing Website at www.purchasing.ri.gov.

NOTE TO VENDORS:

Offers received without the entire completed four-page RIVP Generated Bidder Certification Form attached may result in disqualification.

THIS PAGE IS NOT A BIDDER CERTIFICATION FORM

The Rhode Island Department of Administration/Division of Purchases, on behalf of **Rhode Island College** requests of proposal from qualified vendors to provide a hosted software solution for the **Institutional Review Board for Rhode Island College**. This solicitation is issued in accordance with the State's General Conditions of Purchase, which is available at www.purchasing.ri.gov

INSTRUCTIONS AND NOTIFICATIONS TO OFFERORS:

Potential vendors are advised to review all sections of this RFP carefully and to follow instructions completely, as failure to make a complete submission as described elsewhere herein may result in rejection of the proposal.

Alternative approaches and/or methodologies to accomplish the desired or intended results of this procurement are solicited. However, proposals which depart from or materially alter the terms, requirements, or scope of work defined by this RFP will be rejected as being non-responsive.

All cost associated with developing or submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, or to provide oral or written clarification of its content shall be borne by the Offeror. The State assumes no responsibilities for this cost.

Proposals are considered to be irrevocable for a period of not less than sixty (60) days following the opening date, and may not be withdrawn, except with the express written permission of the State Purchasing Agent.

All prices submitted will be considered to be firm and fixed unless otherwise indicated herein.

Proposals misdirected to other state locations, or which are otherwise not present in the Division of Purchases at the time of opening for any cause will be determined to be late and will not be considered. For the purposes of this requirement, the official time and date shall be that of the time clock in the reception area of the Division of Purchases.

It is intended that an award pursuant to this RFP will be made to a prime vendor, or prime vendors in the various categories, who will assume responsibilities for all aspects of the work. Joint venture and cooperative proposals will not be considered. Subcontractors are permitted, provided that their use is clearly indicated in the vendor's proposal and the subcontractors) to be used is identified in the proposal.

All proposals should include the vendor's FEIN or Social Security Number as evidenced by a Form W-9, downloadable from the Division of Purchases' website at www.purchasing.ri.gov.

The purchase of services under an award made pursuant to this RFP will be contingent on the availability of funds.

Vendors are advised that all materials submitted to the State for consideration in response to this RFP will be considered to be Public Records as defined in Title 38, Chapter 2 of the General

Laws of Rhode Island, without exception, and will be released for inspection immediately upon request once an award has been made.

Interested parties are instructed to peruse the Division of Purchases' website on a regular basis, as additional information or changes relating to this solicitation may be released in the form of an addendum to this RFP. It is the responsibility of all potential Offerors to monitor the website and be familiar with any changes issued as part of an addendum.

Equal Employment Opportunity (G.L. 1956 § 28-5.1-1, et seq.) - §28-5.1-1 Declaration of policy - (a) Equal opportunity and affirmation action toward its achievement is the policy of all units of Rhode Island state government, including all public and quasi-public agencies, commissions, boards and authorities, and in the classified, unclassified, and non-classified services of state employment. This policy applies in all areas where State dollars are spent, in employment, public services, grants and financial assistance, and in state licensing and regulation. For further information, contact the Rhode Island Equal Opportunity Office at (401) 222-3090.

In accordance with Title 7, Chapter 1.2 of the General Laws of Rhode Island, no foreign corporation, a corporation without a Rhode Island business address, shall have the right to transact business in the State until it shall have procured a Certificate of Authority to do so from the Rhode Island Secretary of State (401-222-2040). This is a requirement only of the successful vendor(s).

The vendor should be aware of the State's Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) requirement, which should address the State's goal often percent (10%) participation by MBE's in all State procurements. For further information, please contact the MBE Administrator at (401) 574-8253 or visit the website www.mbe.ri.gov or by email at charles.newton@doa.ri.gov.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Rhode Island College (RIC) desires to implement a packaged software solution for the college's Institutional Review Board (IRB). This software should allow the college to manage RIC's IRB business processes efficiently and provide for an ethical review of college research in a timely manner while ensuring adherence to regulatory and ethical review requirements.

1.2 Summary

RIC is seeking proposals from qualified software providers for a hosted software solution that must be easy to implement, have a single point of support, and meet RIC IRB requirements. The solution should be provided by either a SaaS vendor or an ASP vendor. This RFP will be used to acquire the software (if needed), implementation services, customer support, and any required hardware devices.

The primary function of this system is to provide an out-of-the-box solution that will enable RIC's IRB to manage its business processes efficiently. It should boost operational efficiencies for the IRB with reasonable cost. Further, it should

meet today's guidelines and requirements for the safeguarding of sensitive college information, as well as any regulatory and ethical review requirements.

1.3 Requirements Overview

The software must not only provide an easy to use user interface for the IRB members, but also for all investigators who submit proposals. As part of the features, the software should have sufficient reports to view or analyze the IRB data. The solution must:

- Be a hosted solution with configuration and support originating from one source;
- Be easy and fast to install without placing a demand on RIC's resources;
- Have the capability to monitor and update compliance requirements, so that RIC does not have to notify vendor to change software when regulatory changes occur;
- Provide a central application gateway capable of handling IRB related proposals;
- Have a proven track record with institutions of Higher Education as evidenced by number of years and/or clientele;
- Provide web-based usage, reporting, and management tools;
- Have a disaster recovery plan to minimize the chance of data loss, Rhode Island College being the owner of the data;
- Be up-to-date with current technology, the user interface based on current Web technologies;
- Be able to track changes in protocols as they are revised, so that changes are highlighted or marked for reviewers;
- Describe the support model the vendor uses for fixing system-related issues and for answering questions by the users;
- Allow RIC to keep records for the length of time that meets federal standards, and provide the feature to allow old records to be maintained and/or archived;
- Provide easy access to protocols by investigators, committee chair, and committee members, with specific roles managed by the college's administrative staff;
- Allow Investigators to submit protocols online, and have the capability to allow users to attach supporting documents;
- Have features to easily manage the submitted documents, for example, by grouping information for each protocol together (such as including new application, amendments, revisions, unanticipated problems/adverse events, and renewals of approval);
- Specify the maximum/limit on the number of documents that investigator can upload into each application as required;

- Have an easy to use work flow that allows RIC's IRB members to view and comment on protocols that can be shared among members;
- Allow the IRB chair to view, assign reviewers, make comments, track protocol status, communicate with investigators and reviewers, and track application status;
- Should have features that allow the Committee chair to schedule meetings and maintain meeting minutes;
- Have the ability to search data and generate reports;
- Have the ability to track specific study features, such as vulnerable populations, type of review, levels of risk, or clinical trials;
- Meets professional standards and requirements for IRB compliance;
- Offers opportunities for ongoing training on new features and/or compliance updates;
- Requires minimal need for use of client software;
- Allows IRB Administrators to customize data fields and reports.

1.4 Projected Environment

RIC envisions an environment in which the IRB committee will be able to use this software to process all IRB proposals. The software must be capable of handling special cases, and allows the IRB administrators to make administrative adjustments when situations arise.

1.5 RFP Evaluation

An evaluation committee comprised of RIC representatives will evaluate Vendor responses and determine the firm(s) best suited to fulfill our requirements. The responses to the RFP will be evaluated using the following criteria including, but not limited to:

- System security and reliability
- Years and/or existing clientele in Higher Education
- Timeline for implementation
- Detailed response to questions
- Customer support for IRB administrative staff, committee, and investigators

1.6 RFP Response Guidelines

- Submit one original marked "Official Proposal" and nine (9) copies shall be mailed or delivered to the following address with the name and number of this

RFP# : "**Institutional Review Board Hosted Software Services**"– **Rhode Island College"** clearly marked on each:

RI Dept. of Administration

Division of Purchases, 2nd floor

One Capitol Hill

Providence, RI 02908-5855

- NOTE: Responses received after the submission deadline will not be considered. Responses misdirected to other State locations or which are otherwise not presented in the Division of Purchases by the scheduled due date and time will be determined to be late and will Not be considered. Proposals faxed to the Division of Purchases will not be considered.

In addition to responding to the items specifically requested, Vendor(s) are encouraged to offer innovative or creative proposals that address the needs of Rhode Island College.

1.7 Pre-Submission Questions

- Questions concerning this solicitation may be e-mailed to the Division of Purchases at questions@purchasing.ri.gov no later than **2/14/2013 at noon** (**EST**). Please submit questions in Microsoft Word format and reference the RFP **#** on all correspondence. Answers to questions received, if any, will be posted on the Internet as an addendum to this solicitation. It is the responsibility of all interested parties to download this information. If computer technical assistance is needed, please call the Help Desk at 401 222-2142, ext 134.

2.0   IRB Management Software

2.1 System Integration Requirements

- To what extent can your data elements can be configured by the college's administrators? If possible, will such configurations/modifications incur additional cost?
- How do you deliver your software upgrades?
- What is the maintenance release schedule for your software upgrade?
- Do you provide documentation (business process flow diagrams, and database diagrams, etc.) to the college?

2.2 IRB Management Software Business Requirements

- How do you handle IRB proposals submitted by the investigators?
- How do investigators access and manage all their proposals?
- Does the software have the ability for pre-review approval of proposals, for example, by department heads, before the final proposal is submitted?
- How do you handle revisions in proposals?
- How do the college's IRB Committee review the proposals submitted by investigators?
- How does the IRB administrator manage proposals, committee reviews, and IRB meeting business?
- How does the software track and report on status of proposals, for example, proposals that are started but not completed, under review, approved, expired?
- How does the software handle communication among IRB members?
- How does the software handle communication between the IRB administrator and investigators? Does the communication occur entirely within the software (via internal notifications and/or internal email systems), or does it integrate with external email system (such as the College's email system)? Does the software have templates for different letters (approval, modifications required, renewal of approval, etc.) that automatically insert study-specific information?
- How are investigators notified of expiring projects and the need to renew approval? Is the notification automatic?

2.3 System Support Requirements

- How do you provide support for the college's system administrators (IT)? Please explain.
- How do you provide support for the college's IRB system administrators and committee members? Please explain.
- How is support provided to investigators using the software?
- Do you provide training during the implementation and for changes to the system? If yes, will that be additional cost?

3.0   Company Information

- Please give a short history of your company to demonstrate your experience in providing software solutions to Higher Education.
- Does your company utilize sub-contractors? If so, list them and describe the role each will play in providing services under this contract.
- Please provide sufficient information to demonstrate the financial security and stability of your company.

- Describe your company's position and participation in the industry as a whole. For example, of what organizations are you a member? How do you help to educate your customers on regulations and other issues within the industry?

4.0   Evaluation for Final Consideration

A Selection Committee will evaluate submitted proposals on the basis of the above criteria items. Vendors may be invited to appear before the Committee for in-person or Web presentations. The committee will forward a recommendation (s) to the college's senior administration for making the final recommendation to State of Rhode Island Purchasing.

Notwithstanding the above, the State reserves the right not to award this contract or to award on the basis of cost alone, to accept or reject any or all responses, and to award in its best interest.

Responses found to be technically or substantially non-responsive at any point in the evaluation process will be rejected and not considered further. The State reserves the right to reject any or all responses submitted and to waive any informality in any vendor's submission.

4.1   Evaluation Factors

- **Software Features (Maximum of 40 points)**

    The Vendor will be evaluated on the features and functionalities it offers, including the specific features and usability.

- **Software Price   (Maximum of 40 points)**

    The price will be evaluated along with the above items as a factor in selection. Price response should include any cost that is part of the implementation, customer support, as well as the annual maintenance cost. Lowest cost submitted will receive the maximum score of 40 points and others will receive **(lowest cost / this cost X 40)**

- **Implementation and Maintenance (Maximum of 20 points)**

    The Vendor will be evaluated on the implementation and maintenance, including the initial training and customer support, and ongoing training and support related to troubleshooting and software upgrades/changes.